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**the
holy spirit
and
our
spiritual
life**

JOSEPH AUBRY, S.D.B.

Translated by Paul J. Oligny, O.F.M.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

The more important the person, the briefer the introduction.

Isn't that the unwritten rule followed by "masters of ceremonies" or "toastmasters," whether the introductions are made over a nation-wide network or at an exclusive banquet for the very select few?

Writings about God, the most important Being ever, certainly should not need lengthy introductions. And writings about the Holy Spirit, in our personal opinion, had best be introduced with a minimum of laudatory comment. For, if they truly "breathe" the Spirit, they will affect the readers deeply on their own merits and will resist chambering into merely one kind of experience; if they are not of the Spirit, even the most glowing introduction cannot long conceal that they are empty words.

This booklet is gently unnerving. It is also silently reassuring. We publish it because it has the power to make God in the Person of the Holy Spirit "come alive, today, tomorrow, and always."

Cover by NOËL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction | 5 |
| I. The Necessity and Possible Ambiguity of Devotion to the Holy Spirit among Catholics. | |
| 1. The Holy Spirit is the divine Breath of the New Creation..... | 7 |
| 2. The Spirit assures first of all the spiritual life of the Christ of Easter and of the Church of Pentecost..... | 10 |
| 3. The Spirit acts completely and abidingly in the Church and in each of her mem- bers as the Master and Principle of life..... | 13 |
| 4. The astonishing unawareness of present-day Christians of this presence-action of the Spirit..... | 16 |
| 5. The Christian is not to center himself on the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, but to pray to Him constantly that His quickening and educative work in him may be brought to completion..... | 19 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 2. The principal orientations of the Christian life under the influence of the Holy Spirit. | |
| 1. The Spirit of truth leads us toward Christ and the Father..... | 28 |
| 2. The Spirit of love and unity leads us toward the brethren in the Church..... | 32 |
| 3. The Spirit of strength engages the Christian toward non-believers (or those who believe little) for the furtherance of the Father's plan..... | 37 |
| 4. The condition of these effective orientations: the Spirit of holiness detaches the Christian from himself, from his "flesh" and from the old man in him..... | 40 |
| 3. The Department of a Christian life lived under the dependence of the Holy Spirit. | |
| 1. A humble and recollected life..... | 51 |
| 2. An inspired and free life as an adult Christian..... | 54 |
| 3. An unexpected and fulfilled life under the influence of the gifts..... | 56 |
| 4. The signs of an authentic influence of the Spirit..... | 59 |
| 4. Conclusion..... | 63 |
| 5. Prayers..... | 67 |

INTRODUCTION

"In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

The Christian pronounces these sacred words many times during the day and as he says them he covers his whole being with the sign of his salvation. To be a Christian, in fact, is to have received the unspeakable grace of entering into communion with the very mystery of the living God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

What a pity it is that *"the greatest scandal of religious ignorance in our day is that the phantom of a uni-personal God continues to loiter in the depths of our minds . . . Many fail to see that a God who would not be a Trinity can only be an idol."*¹

The average Christian adores God. What does he understand by the word God? Let us grant that when he adores and prays to the Father, the Creator of heaven and of earth, and to Jesus, his only Son, who became man for our salvation, he is aware of speaking to two distinct Persons. But the Holy Spirit? . . . This divine Person, whose name is inseparable from those of the Father and of the Son, was pronounced over him on the day of his Baptism and now springs from his lips when he makes the sign of the cross or recites the creed.

But we may rightly ask: what place does the Holy Spirit hold in his perspectives as a believer, in his prayer and in his life?

In the pages that follow we would like to propose to what extent the mystery of the Holy Spirit is at the very center of all Christian life. Part One will attempt to situate this mystery and to deduce from it the true sense and urgency of a "devotion to the Holy Spirit," understood in a sound way. Next, we shall enumerate the important orientations in which the Christian in the discharge of such a devotion finds himself engaged. The special orientation it communicates to his life, the "style of life" it sets in motion, will form the subject of the Third Part.

The reader is reminded that in such a sphere, human words left to themselves are nothing. It is our prayer therefore, that the Holy Spirit seize upon these words and use them to reveal Himself to those of His faithful who, desirous of "living," are already calling upon Him in the secrecy of their hearts.

¹ F. Varillon, Fiches A.C.J.F., n. 25 (1949).

A WORD FROM THE TRANSLATOR

It was our intention, at first, to update the second edition of the original French edition of this booklet (Editions Fleurus, 1959) by adding excerpts from the documents of Vatican II. However, in the process of culling references from the documents we soon found ourselves asking the question: did the periti have this pamphlet at their side? Do many of the references to the Holy Spirit in the documents originate from this pamphlet?

No claim is made that the footnotes include all and every reference to the Holy Spirit in the documents of Vatican II. Yet, bearing the format of this booklet in mind, they do give a good sampling. — P.J.O.

I

THE NECESSITY AND POSSIBLE AMBIGUITY OF DEVOTION TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AMONG CATHOLICS

If we are to form an opinion of the nature and importance of the role of the Spirit in the spiritual life of every Christian, we must do a bit of reviewing. We shall, therefore, very briefly recall to mind a few data from Scripture and theology. We shall divide this first part into five sections.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE DIVINE BREATH OF THE NEW CREATION

The Christian is a man whom Love has made to penetrate *into the divine sphere properly so called*. He is a man, says St. John, who has been "re-born," born of God, born into a world completely different from the one he sees and touches. St. Paul says repeatedly that he is a "new" man who has entered into that new creation inaugurated on Easter Sunday by the risen Christ. He is a man who has been divinized, say the Greek Fathers; a three dimensional man, according to the daring

and more accurate definition of St. Irenaeus: "whereas the natural man is composed of a soul and body, the Christian is composed of a soul, and body, and of the Holy Spirit."¹

A great biblical image (all the more so since it coincides with the very name of the Spirit: the "Holy Breath") will enable us at the very outset to situate this divine Person and will already give us an inkling that this Breath is precisely that prodigious newness about Christianity which is not only a doctrine and a morality but also and primarily a Life, the eternal divine life that has mysteriously reached down into the very depths of our being in order to "save" it and transfigure it.

The very old narrative of creation in Chapter Two of Genesis says: "Yahweh God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being" (2,7). These humble sentences are the bearers of an enormous burden of revelation: man owes his entire being to God; but if his body came from the hands of God fashioning the earth, his human breath came from God solely and directly, and even from the innermost being of God. Because of his living soul, man is as it were perpetually dependent on his Creator, united to him in such a way that when he dies he merely "gives his soul back to Him."

Now, the two principal New Testament writers, Paul and John, saw in this creation of the first Adam, already marvelous in itself, *the foreshadowing of an even more wonderful creation* (cf. the offertory prayer of Mass). In the light of the risen Christ, they understood that in him the universe had just become the object of an extraordinary renewal and of a definitive promotion.

Both of them refer to that famous text of Genesis and apply it henceforth to the Christ of glory who, strange to say, is *both the Creator and the second Adam of this renewed universe*.

For St. Paul, Adam and his descendants are subjected to the order of the first creation. Although they have a physical body which is quickened by that very exalted breath that came from God, it could not for all of that save them from death and corruption. But let us rejoice: since Easter there is a second Adam, an infinitely more perfect image of God: the Risen Christ. His body, no longer physical but "spiritual," has been invaded by an entirely new breath of life, so heavenly that from now on death no longer has dominion over him and so dynamic that He will be able to communicate it to the very corpse of believers unto life eternal (1 Cor. 15:40-49). This breath is none other than the Holy Breath, the Holy Spirit.²

St. John adds a detail of extreme importance. Christ does not wait until the hour of the general resurrection to communicate this transcendent Breath to our bodies. He began diffusing it to His Apostles on Easter Sunday night in a kind of first Pentecost, a prelude to the one that was to take place in the din of a great noise fifty days later and which would set the conquering Church in motion.

"In the evening of that same day . . . Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be to you' . . . He breathed on them and said 'Receive the Holy Spirit' (Jn. 20:19-22; cf. 3:5-8; 7:39; Acts 2:1-4, 33, 38-39). And so the new universe which will reach completion with the resurrection of the dead began on Easter Sunday in Jesus and in all those whom he has been able to quicken from that time on with His Breath."³

With that we have said *all that is essential* to the mystery of the Holy Spirit: He is the indispensable Breath by which we breathe in the pure atmosphere of God, and He comes to us from the Risen Christ. Just as the breath of our human life emanated from the mouth of Yahweh in the first creation, so the breath of our divine life gushes from the mouth of the glorified Jesus.

This is not just a simple figure of speech: the breath comes from a true body, from Christ's glorified body endowed with an unimaginable living dynamism; and it is so prodigious a breath that it is no less than a divine Person, a breath so powerful that it needed the powerful wind of Pentecost in order to manifest itself in a fitting way, a breath so efficacious that it transformed the Apostles suddenly and officially established the Church, quickening it with an irresistible impetus to "renew the face of the earth," as the liturgy of Pentecost expresses it, rightly quoting a verse from a creation psalm (Ps. 104:30) and applying it to the Church of the Risen One.

2. THE SPIRIT ASSURES FIRST OF ALL THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE CHRIST OF EASTER AND OF THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST

We should have no fear in delving somewhat into our first reflection: the matter it offers situates the mystery of the Spirit in a very precise way. These facts lay the foundations for all valid reflections on the role of the Spirit in the spiritual life of every Christian. And although these bases are crystal-clear in Scripture, they nonetheless remain quite unknown to the majority of Christians.

Surely we already foresee what a strange illusion it would be for a Christian to think that he could communicate with the Holy Spirit by himself or in any context whatsoever. There is as it were a time and a space of the Holy Spirit. There is *an era* that has begun as well as *a milieu or a defined world* of the Holy Spirit into which we must necessarily enter if we are to receive Him.

This era is that of the Resurrection. The milieu is that of the Church of the Risen Christ. The divine quickening which the Christian, the possessor of the Spirit, enjoys is only a participation in that immense current of life that the Spirit set in motion in the Son on the morning of the Resurrection and in His Church on the morning of Pentecost. These two facts are linked together and are decisive.

If we have even some slight idea of the forward movement of God's plan,⁴ we will not be surprised to learn that there is in its unfolding *an effective history of the Holy Spirit*, just as there is a history of the incarnate Son. The true kingdom of the Spirit, a messianic reality, the glorious and powerful manifestation of divine life, began on Easter Sunday through the inauguration of the second creation in the second Adam. Until then, to use Pauline expressions, the whole world, including Christ Himself in his *kènosis*,⁵ was under the dominion of the flesh. Until then, St. John in turn writes in all his letters, "there was no Spirit as yet because Jesus had not yet been glorified" (7:39).

We must, therefore, understand to what an extent He who is the Spirit of the Son and of the Father is for us the Spirit of the *incarnate risen Son* in a concrete way. Not only is the life of the Christ of glory a life according to the Spirit, a prodigiously "spiritual" life, but it

is as the Risen One seated at the right hand of the Father that Christ *is in possession of the economy of the Spirit*. According to the great Pauline image of the second Adam, Christ has become a *life-giving spirit* (1 Cor. 15:45), a unifying spirit, the head of a new race that has been united to Him because it lives on the divine breath which He communicates to it. The first Adam, however, only transmitted a human breath, leaving men as scattered individuals.

Only after *his first carnal limitations were transcended by the Resurrection*, only when once invested with the Spirit as the living principle of his glorious life as Son does He *really found the Church by breathing into her* His own living principle, this very Holy Spirit, in order to make her the new people of the Son of God. John and Paul "agree in making the bodily humanity of the Savior the point from which the divinising spirit gushes out for us."⁶ St. Peter had already affirmed this on the very day of Pentecost in order to explain the foundation of the Church to his first audience.

From then on we see the *vital* quality of the bond that unites Christ to His Church and enables her to be His Body in an astonishingly realistic sense. The very same mysterious, divine breath animates the risen body of Christ and his Mystical Body.⁷ The Holy Spirit is therefore the common principle and the common form of the life of the Risen Christ and that of His Church.

Christ and the Church are together the common object of the transforming action of the Spirit, with this capital difference that Christ is so by absolute right and in fullness as the second Adam, whereas His Church is in complete dependence on him within the limitations imposed by life on earth and is being gradually trans-

formed. By His very origin and his basic role, the Spirit is therefore for the Church the *power of incorporation and of conformation to the Christ of glory*; for each Christian in particular, He will be the power of incorporation into the Risen Christ as well as into His Church.⁸

In this way the mystery of our spiritual life in the Spirit reinstates us straightway into the *center of the mystery of redemption*: it continually interiorizes in us the mysteries of Easter and Pentecost; it links this spiritual life to that of the Church and to the very life of the Risen Crucified One.

3. THE SPIRIT ACTS COMPLETELY AND ABIDINGLY IN THE CHURCH AND IN EACH OF HER MEMBERS AS THE MASTER AND PRINCIPLE OF LIFE

The consequence of what we have just recalled to mind is that there is no Church without the Spirit any more than there is one without the Risen Christ. It also means that in the world the Church is the normal place of the presence and action of the Spirit, just as she is the normal place of the presence and action of the Risen Christ. St. Irenaeus has already said in a decisive formula: "Where the Church is, there also is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there also is the Church and all grace" (*Adv. Haereses*, III, 24).

The Church always lives at the same time in the glorious Christ and in His Spirit although in different ways. The presence and action of the Spirit extends itself just as far and just as deeply, just as necessarily, just as continuously, as definitively as the presence and action of the risen Son and of the Father. Outside the Spirit there

is no salvation, for the simple reason that there is none outside the Church quickened by the Spirit.

Let us draw from this a basic, primary conclusion. The role of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual life is *total and abiding*, exactly as in the Risen Christ, exactly as in the Church. Christian life is either spiritual (=animated by the Spirit) or it is not. The whole of my supernatural life, all the virtues and actions that emanate from this life and develop it, every work that is dependent on grace and affects my sanctification and my salvation, all this exists and is carried out under the influence of that vital breath which is the Spirit of Christ and of His Church.

To whatever work I devote my life, whether I pray or preach, whether I suffer or perform my daily work, as soon as I do all this in Christ, in imitation of Christ and for Him, I am in the grace of the Holy Spirit, I am in the current of that immense activity that He exerts in a thousand ways at one and the same time on all souls, over the entire expanse of the globe and down through all centuries in order to build up the holy Church of the members of Christ and of the children of the Father. As the liturgy of Pentecost magnificently sings: "The Spirit of the Lord has filled the whole world!"

This diffused influence need not be known or felt in order to exist and extend itself. Yet we cannot say that it is *immaterial* whether Christians *know it* and *recognize it*. The point here is spiritual life: every authentic life is conscious of itself and reflects at least momentarily on its life in its realities and in its strivings, in order to plunge into it with greater lucidity and completeness. That is why I make the distinction between the *two basic forms* of the action of the Holy Spir-

it in us. These distinctions are expressed by the terms "Lord and Lifegiver"⁹ of the Nicene Creed.

"*Giver of life*": the bearer of life, the principle of life. Under this phrase I include the action of the Spirit who makes a Christian (even if he is unaware of it, as in the case of a baptized infant) a member of Christ and of His Church, and presides at his birth as a son of the Father. He is the Spirit, the breath of life, the respiration of the regenerated being, the formal principle of the life from on high.

But in order to grow, Christian life demands *conscious* and *personal adhesion* to the Love of the Father expressed in Christ and *free response* to this Love in its religious and moral activities. It is not enough to exist as a child of God; we must conduct ourselves as children of God. In other words, *faith, hope and charity must grow in us*. Is that not what the spiritual life is: growth in the three basic attitudes of our response to God in Christ? Now, this is where the Holy Spirit also intervenes: He is *not only breath* of our new birth in God; He is also the *educator* of our new condition as sons, of our new condition in Christ and in the Church; not only *life-giving* but *Lord*, "Master," which I would translate as "educator," or to give the word its first meaning, "*Master-teacher*." (Either term can be taken as adjective or noun).

In an outstanding article in *La Vie Spirituelle* in 1921, Father Lemonnyer spoke of the "*maternal role* of the Holy Spirit." The expression is ambiguous: it is no more than a metaphor and runs the risk of having our relationship with the heavenly Father being taken as metaphorical, whereas it is most real. But it does convey that very same idea of the Spirit as an educator and

adds to it the nuance of delicacy, of strength, and of tenderness. Jesus used another expression: the *Paraclete*, which Father Mollat comments upon: "Its meaning is complex: advocate, intercessor, counsellor, protector, support."¹⁰ Are we falsifying the expression by translating it as educator?

It would seem that we can *sum up* the role of the Spirit in our spiritual life by saying: He is the *inner educator of our filial and fraternal life, the educator of our faith, of our hope and of our charity* as saved sons in the Church of today, to the likeness of the well-beloved Son.

4. THE ASTONISHING UNAWARENESS OF PRESENT-DAY CHRISTIANS OF THIS PRESENCE-ACTION OF THE SPIRIT

The sad thing is that the average Christian today knows practically nothing about all this. Some twenty years ago Father Dillard entitled a book on the Holy Spirit: *The Unknown God*.¹¹ As for the so-called instructed or regularly practicing Catholic, he knows that there is a Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity; that he descended on Jesus in the form of a dove and on the Apostles in the form of tongues of fire; that he himself received the Holy Spirit on the day of his confirmation . . . many years ago and long since forgotten; that he is mentioned once a year in the pulpit, namely on Pentecost Sunday; and that it is advisable when he finds himself in a ticklish situation to call upon the Spirit for light. That is about all. In other words, the Christian looks upon the Holy Spirit as an *episodic* person, rather artificial, and were He to be done away with His

suppression would have little effect on his outlook on things, on his prayer life or on his way of living.

What a lamentable situation! Nor will our catechisms greatly remedy the situation. Have we forgotten *our Creed* which, after mentioning the Father and the incarnate Son, goes on to say: "I believe *in* the Holy Spirit, the Communion of saints, the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting," as the early text of the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus advises us to say?¹² Have we forgotten that *Baptism* and *Confirmation* are the two basic sacraments of the Christian, determining all the basic structures and all the major demands of his life in the Church? Have we forgotten that the two greatest feasts of the Christian year are *Easter* and *Pentecost*, and that half of the liturgical year consists in the Sundays after Pentecost which is a sign of the period when the Church is "quickened by the Spirit of the Risen Christ": and that the Christian is obliged to bear abundant fruits of salvation, the fruits of the Spirit in Christ?

How many catechetical teachers think of centering their catechesis around the *two great visible missions* which are the basis of Christianity (cf. the great text of the Epistle to the Galatians 4:4-6)? And yet when St. Peter or St. Paul set forth the "mystery of our faith" before new audiences, what did they say: substantially this: "Open yourself to salvation by repentance, by faith in the Risen Christ and by receiving the Spirit in the Church." And might we not sub-title the Acts of the Apostles: "The Holy Spirit, the gift of the Risen Christ, the source of the apostolate and of the expansion of the Church." And the Epistles of St. Paul: "The Holy Spirit, the gift of the Risen Christ, the source of new, filial life in the

Church." In an admirably condensed formula, St. Bernard was later to write: "We have two pledges of our salvation, the twofold outpouring of the blood and of the Spirit; one without the other would have availed nothing" (Letter 107).

"I will not leave you orphans," Christ had told His Apostles after the Last Supper. "I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever" (Jn. 14:18,16). Indeed many Catholics play the part of orphans, of abandoned children, ignorant of the fact that they live by the Spirit, that He was given to them as the inner, abiding Educator of their divine life and that they are to assume in His regard an attitude of vigilance and docility. "They will all be taught by God, and to hear the teachings of the Father, and learn from it" (Jn. 6:45). This prophetic word that Jesus, the Spokesman of the Father, applied to Himself is equally applicable to his interior Spokesman, the Spirit.

It is extremely urgent that Catholics learn that there is a Holy Spirit and who He is; that they are the Temple of this unspeakable host;¹³ and that each one of them must live a "spiritual" life. We must once again give this beautiful expression its full meaning of "life led under the influence of the Spirit." It moreover seems preferable to the expression "interior life," which gives a false image and leads many to believe that sanctity consists in a kind of introspection or in seeking a secluded spot far removed from the worries of the world. However, we must guard against a *simplistic* reaction and come to a sensible understanding of what "devotion" to the Holy Spirit must consist.

5. THE CHRISTIAN IS NOT TO CENTER HIMSELF ON THE SPIRIT OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON, BUT TO PRAY TO HIM CONSTANTLY THAT HIS QUICKENING AND EDUCATIVE WORK IN HIM MAY BE BROUGHT TO COMPLETION

Mention must be made here of the problem of the Christian's personal relationship with each of the three divine Persons. It is a mysterious, unspeakable domain which concerns the most hidden essence of the very life of God and where the wisest theologians, dazzled by the mystery, tread fearfully and gropingly. And yet, the words of Jesus and of his Apostles are clear enough, the reflections of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are sufficiently in agreement to enable us to affirm the following, even if in a stammering way. When a divine Person, the Father or the eternal Son, or their common Spirit, act in me to bring about my conversion, to transform me, to urge me on to charity, in a word, to produce a certain objective result in me, this Person can act only jointly with the other Two; the Three together shine forth here in a unity of being and action that forbids me to reach the conclusion that they are three Gods. Nevertheless, in this one activity, each Person keeps His consistency and His character and in *it each one affirms that He is present to me and bound to me in His distinction and His own originality*. The whole mystery of Christian salvation is at stake here.

For example, it is the Father, His Son and their Spirit, and not the Jewish God nor the "divine nature," who each personally *dwell* in me; and each One *enters into an original personal relationship* with me through the intermediary of the humanity of Christ who be-

came incarnate precisely that I might share in His own sonship. These presences and these relationships are not *absolutely interchangeable*. The Father binds me to himself as Father, for He sees me truly participating in the eternal relationship by which, begetting to Himself a Son, He is Father in all the fullness of the term. Incorporated by grace into the humanity of this Son, I myself therefore become by adoption but very truly so a son.

And at the same time, the Son binds me to Himself in as much as He is the Son, for He sees in me and truly makes me this human brother, sweeping me along in turn into His incoercible, filial thrust toward the Father.

But at the same time, the Spirit also binds me to Himself in as much as He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, proceeding from the Two together and being "given" to me by the Two of them to be in me the living Witness of their presence and of their love as Father and only begotten Son. To say, as some have said, that grace makes me a son of the Trinity taken globally or as an aggregate, or of the divine Essence seems to mean nothing. I do, therefore, turn toward the Father as *my* Father and supreme Source of *all authenticity*; toward the Son as toward *my eldest brother* in whom I am an adopted son; toward the Holy Spirit as toward Him who is in me because of my eldest Brother and of my Father, *my supreme Guest*, sent by Them and completely attributable to Them. *Christian life is primarily the living relationship to these unspeakable Persons or it is nothing.*

Scripture, Tradition, and the liturgy will tell me how I must run toward the Spirit in order to attain

Him in His personal truth and bind myself to him. The Spirit, *as revealed by Jesus*, has a very special configuration. Does He even have a configuration? Jesus calls himself the Son and He was constantly turning toward the First Person whom He called His Father: these are personal names. Although the Spirit is undoubtedly a Person, He bears only names of His activity and function: Breath, Paraclete, Power from on high (the same holds for His symbols: wind, water, fire, dove . . .), and in all His functions He seems to be somewhat at the service of the Son and of the Father in their salvific plan. No mention is ever made of Jesus praying to Him or of holding a dialogue with Him.

According to John, eternal life consists in knowing the Father and the Son, entering into personal communion (in society, *koinonia*) with Them and of resembling Them in light and love. The Spirit does not institute this life; He looms as its dynamic principle: His mysterious personality is identified with a divine Energy entirely devoted to giving rise to it, to its preservation and growth.

In brief, the Church has a twofold objective center of ingathering and of unity: Christ of which she is the Body and the Father whose family she is; she belongs to Christ and to the Father, not to the Spirit. The Spirit is responsible for the interior living union of the Son, of the Father and of the sons; He is the divine bond and the divine strength that binds them to one another.

All this is tied in with other significant facts: nowhere do we find any prayer to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, but several to the Father and to the Son. In fact not until the fourth century do we find

reliable doxologies to the Holy Spirit. Lastly, it is noteworthy that *no liturgical prayer* is addressed to Him; even on Pentecost Sunday we ask the Father to give Him through Jesus Christ. He becomes the direct interlocutor of the Church only in relatively recent poetic works which can be summarized in the prayer: "Come, Holy Spirit . . ."

Unlike the Father or the Son, the Spirit is never the One who draws us to Himself or groups us around Himself; He is the One in whom we say "Jesus is Lord" and cry out "Abba, Father". (1 Cor. 12:3; Rom. 8:13).

The Protestant theologian, Theo Preiss, rightly wrote: "*I would gladly say that the dominant trait of the Spirit is His perfect discretion, His complete humility.*"¹⁴

Discretion, humility: are not these the qualifications of an educator who brings up a child not to attach him to himself but for the child himself, for his parents, and for those to whom his vocation will bind him later on?

What the Spirit, the love of the Father poured forth in us by Jesus (Rom. 5:5), asks of us is certainly not to center ourselves on Him. This would run the risk of a sort of spiritual narcissism. He does ask us to let ourselves be turned by Him toward the Son, toward the Father, and toward our brothers, to allow ourselves to be transformed by Him into the image of the Son.

This does not tend to exclude devotion to the Holy Spirit but to situate it in the way it is taught in a strophe of the "Veni Creator": "Grant that through You we may know the Father and the Son, and may we ever believe You to be the Spirit of both the Father and the Son." To believe continually in the Spirit of the Father and of the Son in order to better know the Father and the Son means to become ever more acutely aware of

this presence, of this divine energy in us and to call upon it continually. *A basic attitude* is required of the Christian with reference to the Spirit: vigilance and a *basic formula of prayer*: "Come." Moreover, through such a prayer the Christian addresses himself indirectly to the Father and the Son who alone can send the Spirit. But this "Come" can evidently be spelled out and can express itself indefinitely according to the many aspects of God's operation in us: "Come, Holy Spirit, purify me, enlighten me, strengthen me, console me, etc..." It suffices here to recall to mind the admirable appeals found in the sequence for Pentecost:

Heal our wounds, our strength renew;
On our dryness pour Thy dew.
Wash the stains of guilt away;
Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill.

Let us conclude this first part by saying: the sign of an authentic spiritual life is frequent and urgent appeal to the Spirit. That is the secret of perfection that Cardinal Mercier was eager to share with his priests and with every fervent soul:

"I am going to reveal to you a secret of sanctity and happiness. Every day for five minutes keep your imagination quiet, shut your eyes to all the things of sense, and close your ears to all the sounds of earth so that you may enter within yourselves. There in the sanctuary of your baptized soul, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, speak to that divine Spirit and say:

'O Holy Spirit, soul of my soul, I adore You. Enlighten, guide, strengthen and console me. Tell me what I ought to do and command me to do it. I promise to

be submissive in everything that You desire of me and to accept all that You permit to happen to me. Only show me Your will.'

"If you do this, yours will be a happy and serene life. You will be consoled even in the midst of troubles, for grace will be given in proportion to the trial and He will give you the strength to bear it. You will arrive at the gates of paradise full of merit.

"This submission to the Holy Spirit is the secret to sanctity."

¹ *Adversus Haereses*, V, 3. St. Irenaeus, the successor of St. Pothinus as bishop of Lyon in 177, is the first great theologian of the Church and of the Holy Spirit, especially in the important treatise cited above. As we read it, we suspect that, unlike present-day preachers, he never spoke of Christian life nor of the Church without pointing out how they are both profoundly inspired by the Spirit.

² Our English word "spirit" does not convey the full meaning of the Hebrew word *ruah*, in Greek *pneuma*, and in Latin *spiritus*. One and the same word designates wind, life-giving breath, and the Spirit. If the reader wishes to delve more deeply into all the nuances of this scriptural term, we refer him to one or the other of the following studies: Guillet, *Themes of the Bible*, trans. Albert J. LaMothe, Jr. (Notre Dame, Ind.: Fides, 1960), chap. 7, The Breath of Yahweh; two biblical paperbacks, nn. 14 & 17 of the Ligue de l'Evangile; Durrwell, *The Resurrection: A Biblical Study*, trans. Rosemary Sheed (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960), chaps. II and III; McKenzie, *Dictionary of the Bible*, (Milwaukee, Bruce, 1965), art. Spirit, p. 840ff.

³ "Through this Spirit, who is 'the pledge of our inheritance' (Eph. 1: 14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of 'the redemption of the body' (Rom. 8:23): 'If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the death dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who dwells in you' (Rom. 8:11)" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #22).

⁴ "It is, finally, through the gift of the Holy Spirit that man comes by faith to the contemplation and appreciation of the divine plan" (*Ibid.*, #15).

⁵ This is a transcription of the Greek word *kènosis*, which St. Paul used in his Epistle to the Philippians (2:7) to express in a forceful way

the state of deprivation willed by the Son of God in His Incarnation: "He emptied himself," that is, He deprived Himself of the glory to which His divine nature entitled Him in order to take on the human condition of a slave.

6 *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

7 "Now, before freely giving His life for the world, the Lord Jesus so arranged the ministry of the apostles and so promised to send the Holy Spirit, that both they and the Spirit were to be associated in effecting the world of salvation always and everywhere. Throughout all ages, the Holy Spirit gives the entire Church 'unity of fellowship and in service; He furnishes her with various gifts, both hierarchical and charismatic.' He vivifies ecclesiastical institutions as a kind of soul and instills into the hearts of the faithful the same mission spirit which motivated Christ Himself. Sometimes He visibly anticipates the apostles' action, just as He unceasingly accompanies and directs it in different ways" (*Ad Gentes*, #4).

8 "When the work which the Father had given the Son to do on earth was accomplished, the Holy Spirit was sent on the day of Pentecost in order that He might forever sanctify the Church, and thus all believers would have access to the Father through Christ in the one Spirit. He is the Spirit of life, a fountain of water springing up to life eternal . . .

"The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple. In them He prays and bears witness to the fact that they are adopted sons. The Spirit guides the Church into the fullness of truth and gives her a unity of fellowship and service. He furnishes and directs her with various gifts, both hierarchical and charismatic, and adorns her with the fruits of His grace . . . Thus, the Church shines forth as 'a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit'" (*Lumen Gentium*, #4).

9 "God finally sent His Son's Spirit as Lord and Lifegiver" (*Lumen Gentium*, #13).

10 Cf. *Jerusalem Bible*, NT, p. 179, n. i.

11 "Although by the power of the Holy Spirit the Church has remained the faithful spouse of her Lord and has never ceased to be the sign of salvation on earth, still she is very well aware that among her members, both clerical and lay, some have been unfaithful to the Spirit of God during the course of many centuries. In the present age, too, it does not escape the Church how great a distance lies between the message she offers and the human failings of those to whom the gospel is entrusted.

"Whatever be the judgment of history on these defects, we ought to be conscious of them, and struggle against them energetically, lest they inflict harm on the spread of the gospel. The Church also realizes that in working out her relationship with the world she always has great need of the ripening which comes from the experience of the centuries. Led by

the Holy Spirit, Mother Church unceasingly exhorts her sons 'to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ can shine more brightly on the face of the Church'" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #43).

¹² Hippolytus was a scholarly and zealous priest who lived in Rome around 220. The most famous of his many writings is the *Apostolic Tradition*. It has inestimable value for us because it constitutes the oldest known liturgical and canonical collection of the Roman Church. It contains a ritual for Baptism which contains the essential and definitive elements of our creed and a text of the Canon of the Mass which we shall refer to later on. Although he accused Pope Callistus I of heresy, he died a martyr in 235, and for this he is honored as a saint (feast day Aug. 13).

¹³ "The Spirit dwells in the Church and in the hearts of the faithful as in a temple." Cf. n. 8 *supra*.

¹⁴ *Le Témoignage intérieur du Saint-Esprit*, Cahier de l'actualité protestante, (Neuchâtel, ed. Delachaux), p. 26.

II

THE PRINCIPAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Towards whom and what does this divine Educator lead the Christian who makes himself docile in His hands? He guides him in three directions, which I will associate (somewhat artificially) with three traditional titles of the Spirit and to the three theological virtues which He stirs up in us.

As the Spirit of truth, the Educator of faith, He first of all leads the Christian toward the person of Christ and to that of the Father. As the Spirit of love and unity, the Educator of charity, He leads the Christian toward his brothers in the Church. Lastly, as the Spirit of strength, the Educator of hope, He involves Christians in sacred history, in the work of spreading the Church and of advancing God's plan.

These three directions will be rather well illustrated scripturally by the role of the Spirit as presented by St. John, then by St. Paul, and finally by St. Luke in the Acts, and on

the level of actuality by the contemplative and liturgical movements on the one hand, on the other by the ecumenical movements, and finally by the missionary movement. It will be noted that in these three directions the Spirit brings about a work of purification and of self-uprooting in the Christian.

1. THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH LEADS US TOWARD CHRIST AND THE FATHER

“Through the risen Christ, both of us have in the one Spirit our way to come to the Father” (Eph. 2:18): this admirable formula says in lapidary style that the most sublime role of the Spirit who “reaches the depths of everything, even the depths of God” (1 Cor. 2:10) is to make us penetrate into the world of God even as far as the Father, by making us penetrate into the world of the Resurrection where the Son, the Redeemer, reigns.

Faith is, first of all, the encounter and welcome of these two infinite, invisible, and mysterious Persons. Being a persistent affirmation of their presence, it inaugurates an unspeakable and living dialogue and makes every Christian life a mystical life in the most real sense of the word, a mystery through contact with the essential mystery of the living God.

The Spirit shines forth then as the very presence of the Father and of the Son perfectly interiorized. He collaborates with my freedom in order to continually promote the welcome I extend to Them in faithfulness.

Welcome and knowledge of the Risen Christ first of all. We are familiar with the beautiful texts of John:

"When the advocate comes . . . , He will be my witness" (Jn. 15:26); and of Paul: "Even if we did once know Christ in the flesh, that is not how we know him now" (2 Cor. 5:16); we now know Him according to the Spirit, that is to say, with the light and dispositions breathed into the new man by the presence of the Spirit. "All I want is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection . . ." ¹

In addition to the Christians who are still weak, carnal, *psychic*, and children, Paul discerns the "perfect," spiritual, mature Christian whom a solid adherence to the truth, and exalted virtue and a great love render capable of a profound spiritual penetration, especially for penetrating into the mystery of God's plans whose center is Jesus Christ, and to appreciate the heavenly, unspeakable treasures that await us by participation in his Resurrection.

Next comes *welcome and knowledge of the infinite Father*. Only the Spirit can give us the sense of God, the sense of the divine realities, what theologians call knowledge "by connaturality," that is to say, not by concepts but by the truth of the being that has been finally aligned, that has harmonized itself with the Being of God and has thereby made itself fit to grasp Him better.

Left to ourselves, we have a strong tendency to create a God according to our standards. The Spirit works to brush aside in us anything that will veil the transcendence of God in order to make us enter into beneficial darkness and silence where the true God begins to reveal Himself.²

And this God, we in all truth call our Father. "Everyone moved by the spirit is a son of God. The spirit you received is not the spirit of slaves bringing fear into your lives

again; it is the spirit of sons, and it makes us cry out, 'Abba, Father'! The Spirit himself and our spirit bear united witness that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:14-16). Here we would like to make three useful observations:

a) The Spirit increases in the docile Christian *the sense of filial prayer*, the sense of *worship* in spirit and in truth, the sense of the whole of life offered as a liturgy "to the greater glory of the Father". One of the most significant forms of the action of the Spirit in a person is that He "theocentralizes" his life more and more; He makes him a "religious" person.

b) The Spirit incites in the docile Christian a *spiritual*, concrete *perception* of the inner presence of God, an obscure and groping *experience of God*, but nonetheless real and verifiable by signs, especially by His delectable fruits. St. John and St. Paul join each other on this point and certify for us at least the passing existence of this awareness of God, nor is it necessary to be an exceptional mystic to have experienced it.

We highly recommend the excellent book by M. Mouroux, *Christian Experience*,³ especially chapter 5 entitled "The Experience of the Spirit in St. Paul," and chapter 6: "The Christian Experience in the First Epistle of St. John."

c) Lastly, the Spirit stirs up in the docile Christian *the groaning desire for perfect filiation* (Rom. 8:23-27), He Himself being the pledge of our celestial inheritance. Thanks to the Spirit, the Christian comes to realize the completely relative value of earthly goods, He detaches Him from them, and sometimes [the Spirit] turns him against them so that he may cling to what is lasting. He makes him say: "I want to be gone and be with Christ" (Phil. 1:23).

All these dimensions of authentic knowledge of Christ and of the Father are contained in the extraordinary eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, which is truly the great poem of the "spiritual" life of the Christian, one of the summits of Scripture.

There is no shortage of signs around us to reveal to us that the Spirit is bringing about deep *within the Church today* a work of reorienting Christian consciences toward the living God. The famous appeal of His Eminence Cardinal Suhard in his *Letter* of 1948 on "the Sense of God" is beginning to be heard.

In a conference in which he explained the present-day tendencies of Catholicity in France, Bishop Ancel noted: "*Christianity wishes to regain the sense of God.*"⁴ and this is especially observable in *three remarkable "movements."* Many young men are flocking to Benedictine, Trappist and Carmelite monasteries. This increase in contemplative vocations is verified even in a business oriented country such as the United States. Need we mention the outstanding witness of Thomas Merton.

There is now a better understanding than there was before that God is sovereignly deserving that we sacrifice all to His unique praise and adoration. I shall merely draw attention to what is already so evident, *the biblical and liturgical movements*,⁵ so intimately linked together. Because of these two movements Christians are hearing the Word of God and are being educated to be authentic adorers in spirit and in truth. The acts of the magisterium (the encyclicals on biblical studies, on the liturgy, on sacred music), the reforms under way and the huge work of research and adaptation all contribute to center our piety more firmly no longer on a vague God but on the living divine Person and on the mystery of Christ

the Savior. In all of this we cannot help but discern the powerful breath of the Holy Spirit.

2. THE SPIRIT OF LOVE AND UNITY LEADS US TOWARD THE BRETHREN IN THE CHURCH

Two sentences by Paul can again illustrate this aspect of the role of the Spirit: "The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us" (Rom. 5:5); and "just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised" (1 Cor. 12:13).

In order to understand this doctrine and to what an extent the Spirit leads us to brotherly love, it is well to recall to mind what was said in the beginning: the Spirit who quickens the Christian is first of all the Spirit of the Risen Christ and the Spirit of the Church, the Body of Christ, in such a way that when a Christian receives the Spirit he is immediately incorporated into Christ and into His Church.

a) In the first place the Spirit is *the witness in us of the love of the Father revealed in the crucified Christ*. This Spirit whom the Risen Christ possesses an excess of for Himself and for us, Christ as a matter of fact had to earn and win; the Spirit is for all times *the fruit and the sign of Christ's immolation*.

St. John understood this admirably as he stood beneath the cross. The soldier's thrust of the lance that opened the side of the Crucified One caused blood and

water to flow: first, blood, the sign of the sacrifice of His flesh; then water, *the living water of the Holy Spirit* which this sacrifice alone could release. Borrowing from the great image of Exodus, John sees the body of Christ as the sacred rock that had to be struck so that the water of eternal life that was to quench the thirst of the Christian people might gush forth: the Holy Spirit Himself.

What meaning this gives to devotion to the Sacred Heart! The genuine image of the Sacred Heart is not the God of red plaster in our religious article stores. It is the crucifix bearing the wounded side: the water flowing from it is the Spirit who gushes from the Heart of Christ and whom He gives me to drink so that He may take up His abode in me as a living love, as an invitation that I in turn immolate myself for my brothers.

b) But I receive the Holy Spirit not only from Christ but also *from His Church* both as a brotherly *community* and as a hierarchical *society*. Or rather, I always receive Him from Christ but through His living Body and through the organ of the ecclesiastical ministry.

Who gave me the Holy Spirit in Baptism if not the priest and who gave Him to me at Confirmation if not the bishop? Who is constantly giving me in the sacrament of Penance that Spirit "*who is Himself the forgiveness of all sins*" (postcommunion for Tuesday of Pentecost) if not the priest and even more so in the sacrament of the Eucharist, if not again the hierarchical Church?

This is no less clear for the priest who through the imposition of hands receives the Spirit on his ordination day from the bishop and from the body of priests present at the ceremony. From this I can conclude that this Spirit, if I let Him act genuinely in me, will con-

stantly invite me to be submissive to that hierarchical Church through which He was given to me.⁶

And this Spirit who is given to me through the Church is also given to me *in her and for her*. Through this one Spirit, as by the one consecrated Bread distributed to me and to all my brothers, I am in vital, close union with them as with Christ. The solidarity which the "bonds of blood set up between the members of one family or of one country, He Himself sets up in the universal and local Church.

Through the "bond of the Spirit," which the blood of Jesus merited for us, we are constituted the race of new men, configured to the Son so that we might be both sons of the Father and brothers of each other. This Spirit is the life-giving principle of our charity toward all for the preservation of unity.⁷

In Him we all find our new inner Law which abolishes the tyranny of the old one and gently disposes us to constantly surpass ourselves in mutual love, the debt that is never completely paid: "*What the Spirit brings is very different: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control*" (Gal. 5:22).

c) Finally, the Spirit gives the Christian a more or less official *function*, a more or less demonstrative *mission of service* in the Church.⁸ The most general and moreover the most sacred functions are given through the character of the *sacraments* of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders. For most people they are spelled out by the sacrament of Matrimony. Other additional functions that are more supple and more adapted to each milieu are given by the *charisms*:⁹ gifts of the Spirit animating an "organized" community.

The Spirit distributes these gifts as He pleases and in a complementary way for the usefulness of the group, according to the doctrine splendidly expounded by Paul to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 12). Here we have a description of what the spiritual life is, not in an abstract way but in the fulfillment of a mission in the concrete Church where in the providence of God, the Father, each Christian lives at a specific point in space and in time.

Deep-seated charity and charismatic gifts mutually sustain each other as it were. It would be erroneous to believe that charisms are necessarily exceptional or astonishing.¹⁰ The Spirit readily expands a person's natural gifts to make them discreetly serve the Church.

That the Spirit is *today* actively at work in that direction cannot be questioned. Bishop Ancel pointed this out in the conference mentioned above: "What I believe to be the general orientation of Christianity today might be stated in these words: it is headed in the direction of an ever more profound discovery of the mystery of the Church and of the fullness of her mission in the world" (this last expression can also be used to illustrate the third direction of the action of the Spirit which we will take up presently).

From the multiple evidences of this rediscovery let us choose three more significant ones. The *laity* have become aware that they *are* the Church, the living members of that Church, the Bride of Christ, for whom the hierarchy and the sacraments exist. (Let us recall to mind the amazing discovery and advantage the first generation of Jocists took of the doctrine of the Mystical Body and which received its authoritative commentary in the encyclical of Pius XII in 1943).

They have to live the life of the Church, to play

their role in it and accept their responsibility so that this life may become more intense and diffuse itself.¹¹ To this belongs on the one hand the extraordinary development of conjugal and *family spirituality*,¹² the home being a cell of the Church where the values of mutual charity are particularly brought into play; on the other hand the certain but less elaborate development of the *parochial spirit*,¹³ an awareness of the reality of the local Church, the incarnation of the universal Church.

Another trait: *attachment to Mother Church*, either in her over-all immense reality or in her hierarchy.¹⁴ In particular we cannot help but discern the action of the Spirit in the heroic fidelity of so many Christians living in the Communist world to their bishops and to the Pope, at a time when enormous pressures have been brought to bear upon them to force them to join national churches separated from Rome. Father John Tong's profession of faith, worthy of the most beautiful professions of the first martyrs, comes to mind.¹⁵

Lastly, the *ecumenical movement* looms under the sign of the unifying Spirit; thus the decree of the Holy Office, Dec. 20, 1949, expressed the attitude of the Catholic Church regarding this movement. The shame and sorrow felt in the face of the scandal of divisiveness among Christians,¹⁶ the yearning for the visible unity of the Church, that universal prayer that ascends heavenward each year from January 18 to 25 from all the Christian confessions toward the same Christ and the same Father — all of this is new and cannot be explained solely by the good will of Christians. It is one of those outbursts that the Holy Spirit periodically sets in motion, for the Spirit breathes where He wills.¹⁷

3. THE SPIRIT OF STRENGTH ENGAGES THE CHRISTIAN
TOWARD NON-BELIEVERS (OR THOSE WHO BELIEVE
LITTLE) FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF THE FATHER'S
PLAN¹⁸

a) Here we come to an especially important aspect of the role of the Spirit in the expanding history of salvation, its prophetic and missionary aspect, so noticeable in the personages of the Old Testament and more still and in a new way in the Apóstles and to quite varied degrees in all confirmed Christians; so noticeable in any case in the Church of today, particularly in the desire which Christians experience from their presence to the world.

According to Peter's discourse on Pentecost Sunday, *all the members* of the new people have become "*prophets*" whom the Spirit inspires and causes to speak in the name of God in accordance with His redeeming plan. This title in no way signifies that the Christian has received charisms of an extraordinary nature, nor that he has to preach at every available opportunity. Very akin to that of *witness*, it signifies that under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit the Christian has seen and heard (in faith evidently) the Risen Christ, the genuineness and splendor of His divinity and of His mission; that he professes and proclaims these events as indisputable and that he has been sent to certify them to those who have not yet seen and heard them or who have only done so with apprehension.

This true mission which is the serious responsibility of every adult Christian he exercises according to his own providential situation, most often by a diffuse, calm and simple dissemination, by his judgments on things and

events, by his daily actions, by the general orientation and axis that he has given to his thought and life, by the Christian influence which he thereby exercises in all the sectors of his life.¹⁹

In that way every Christian is light and salt, messenger and herald of the Good News; in an imperative way he poses the religious problem, the problem of God and of His Risen Christ in the modern Church and world. God and Christ are revealed through him, that is to say, attest their presence and send out their call to such individuals.

In this way, too, the Holy Spirit is *at the basis of every apostolate* of Catholic Action,²⁰ whether individual and private or organized and official. One need only be involved with a group of young or adult Catholic Actionists to discern how the Spirit, the witness of Jesus, acts through them in the world today and gives glory through them to Christ and to the Father whose name is manifested for the gradual success of the universe and of history. The incoercible dynamism of the Spirit of Pentecost continues. It manifests the *strength of God in the world through the intermediary of Christians* and thus justifies our hope.

How necessary it is for Christians to be more and more convinced of this aspect of their spiritual life! How necessary it is for them to penetrate the sense of Pentecost, of the Acts of the Apostles, of their own Confirmation, that scandalously unappreciated Sacrament! As a result many would be less prone to drag their feet and less indifferent in their actions.²¹

b) And finally let us say that the same Spirit of the Christian who is prophet and witness is also the Spirit

of the *steadfast and persecuted Christian*, a Spirit of strength; and this also has relevance.²² The more a Christian makes the light of Christ shine, the more he moves hearts but also all the more he arouses opposition at the same time.

The case is typical of the prophets of the Old Testament, of Jesus Himself, of the Apostles to whom Jesus had specifically foretold both persecution and the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who would be their strength, the inspirer of their courageous witness and their defender before the world and its prince. The supreme witness is death (the word *martyr* means witness): the most unanimous tradition believes that Christ was able to endure His death because of the very special assistance of His Spirit. The most typical example is precisely that of the first martyr, St. Stephen, the deacon who was "filled with the Spirit" (Acts 6:3,5,8,10; 7:51,55). The martyrs are therefore the masterpieces of the educative power of the Holy Spirit.

In brief, the Spirit opens the heart of the docile Christian more and more to the very same horizons which were those of the beloved Son: the glory of the Father through the fulfillment of His plan of salvation for the world.

Is it necessary to go into a detailed proof of the extent to which the *Church of today* has made herself pervious to this great Breath? For the last thirty years a missionary awakening of extraordinary proportions has been taking place.²³ There is no question of concealing the difficulties, the trials nor even the dangers it has encountered. But neither must we belittle its genuineness nor the wonderful fruits it has already produced and shows promise of producing.

We remind the reader of the many Catholic Action movements, particularly the specialized movements among the young and the adults. Let us recall to mind the patient renewal of many parishes that have become "missionary communities." Our thoughts turn to Pax Christi, to the Social Weeks, etc. Recall likewise the prodigious rise of secular institutes that intend to lead a religious life in the very midst of the paganized world (by the end of 1953 more than two hundred of these institutes had petitioned Rome for approval and official recognition.²⁴

Our thoughts turn also to the great progress of foreign missions and to the multitude of martyrs who have shed luster on a goodly number of them...²⁵ We therefore conclude that in our era, one of the most beautiful in the history of the Church, the Spirit co-ordinates His action in the depths of each soul to the action that He sets in motion in the entire Body of Christ.

4. THE CONDITION OF THESE EFFECTIVE ORIENTATIONS: THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS DETACHES THE CHRISTIAN FROM HIS "FLESH" AND FROM THE OLD MAN IN HIM

To turn ourselves toward Christ and the Father, then toward our brothers in charity, and finally toward the world to be saved in a charity that goes to the limits of its exigencies, this the Spirit does not bring about in the Christian by starting with nothing. It is not a question of a simple superelevation but of a *transformation* like that which transformed the Twelve and the obtuse and faint-hearted disciples into apostles of light and fire.

It is at the depths of his sin, that is, of his *inveterate and spontaneous egoism* that the Spirit goes in search of

man on the day of his Baptism: by uniting him to the Redeemer and to His Church, He will have to *open him to love* God and others, to turn him away from himself, detach him from his own self-pleasure and admiration, and make him lose his life so that he may find Life.

The philosophers — and for that matter every man of experience — had already noted a sort of basic disagreement between the flesh and the spirit: the flesh dingy and heavy, quickly prone to grow old, and the soul alert, avid for renewal and life. More profoundly the Christian perceives a disagreement between what he is by nature, body and soul, and that to which infinite Love calls him.

He can be a spiritual being according to the spirit and yet not know or not desire that transcendent ascent to the heavenly life in the Spirit. To attain it, he must conquer a twofold insubordination: not only that of the flesh to the spirit but even that of the spirit to God who calls him.

Impurity is a radical obstacle to Christian life in the Holy Spirit, that Guest of a temple that cannot be profaned; complacent pride is an even greater obstacle. Both are characteristic forms of egoism and close man to love. It is the man, a slave to both pride and impurity that St. Paul calls "the old man," under the former rule of the "flesh" and of paganism. Alas! the Christian will strive to be a new man but he will not be *completely* one until the day of the resurrection of his flesh.²⁶

Even in the order of grace which begins to reunite him to the Risen Christ, the new Adam, he still remains subjected to the first Adam. Something pagan and Jewish remains in him. And so the Spirit appears to Him in his life to be the *life-giving principle of an unyielding*

battle that began at Baptism and that he must patiently pursue in the painful effort of each day.

The struggle is (in the Pauline sense) *between the "flesh" and the "spirit"* (that is to say, that part in man made new by the presence of the Holy Spirit). And Paul observed the acuteness of this struggle in himself and in his Christians (see the Epistles to the Romans 7:14-18, and to the Galatians 5:16-25).

It is also and even more profoundly so a battle between *Satan and the Spirit*, who wrangle over the heart of man. This tragic combat between the Dove and the Serpent begins during the baptismal rite: "Depart from him (her), unclean spirit, and give place to the Holy Spirit, the Consoler," the priest says (and these terms might easily be made even more explicit: the uncleanness is egoism and hatred: holiness is love).

The life of the Christian will consist in abandoning himself more and more to the Spirit in order to more and more ratify His triumph over Satan and his cohorts: sin, the world, and death. The Christian is thereby "renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16), and in the aging of his flesh he has the certitude of making progress toward the eternal youth of the resurrection.

It was necessary to point out this *basic* law of renunciation and of effort without which all further work of the Spirit is blocked. But, on the contrary, as soon as the Christian has courageously renounced sin, the Spirit manifests Himself more profoundly in him and gives his life a behavior of being saved and risen.

¹ Ph. 3,10; see the admirable passage *ibid.*, 3, 8-16.

² Cf. Bouyer, *Le Sens de la vie monastique*, pp. 132-133.

3 M. Mouroux, *Christian Experience*, trans. G. Lamb (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1954).

4 Given at Paris, May 12, 1952, in a series of conferences of St. Odile.

5 "Zeal for the promotion and restoration of the liturgy is rightly held to be a sign of the providential dispositions of God in our time, as a movement of the Holy Spirit in His Church. It is today a distinguishing mark of the Church's life, indeed of the whole tenor of contemporary religious thought and action" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #43).

6 "'The obedience of faith' must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God, offering 'the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals,' and freely assenting to the truth revealed by Him. If this faith is to be shown, the grace of God and the interior help of the Holy Spirit must precede and assist, moving the heart and turning it to God, opening the eyes of the mind, and giving 'joy and ease to everyone in assenting to the truth and believing it.' To bring about an ever deeper understanding of revelation, the same Holy Spirit constantly brings faith to completion by His gifts" (*Dei Verbum*, #5).

7 "All men are called to belong to the new People of God. Wherefore this People, while remaining one and unique, is to be spread throughout the whole world and must exist in all ages, so that the purpose of God's will may be fulfilled. In the beginning God made human nature one. After His children were scattered, He decreed that they should at length be unified again. It was for this reason that God sent His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, that He might be Teacher, King and Priest of all, the Head of the new and universal people of the sons of God. For this God finally sent His Son's Spirit as Lord and Lifegiver. He it is who, on behalf of the whole Church and each and every one of those who believe, is the principle of their coming together and remaining together in the teaching of the apostles and in fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers" (*Lumen Gentium*, #13).

8 The laity derive the right and duty with respect to the apostolate from their union with Christ their Head. Incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord himself. They are consecrated into a royal priesthood and a holy people in order that they may offer spiritual sacrifices through everything they do, and may witness to Christ throughout the world. For their part, the sacraments, especially the most holy Eucharist, communicate and nourish that charity which is the soul of the entire apostolate" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #3).

"For this the Church was founded: that by spreading the kingdom of Christ everywhere for the glory of God the Father, she might bring all men to share in Christ's saving redemption; and that through them the

whole world might in actual fact be brought into relationship with Him. All activity of the Mystical Body directed to the attainment of this goal is called the apostolate, and the Church carries it on in various ways through all her members. For by its very nature the Christian vocation is also a vocation to the apostolate. No part of the structure of a living body is merely passive but each has a share in the functions as well as in the life of the body. So, too, in the body of Christ, which is the Church, the whole body, 'according to the functioning in due measure of each single part, derives its increase'. Indeed, so intimately are the parts linked and interrelated in this body that the member who fails to make his proper contribution to the development of the Church must be said to be useful neither to the Church nor to himself.

"In the Church, there is diversity of service but unity of purpose. Christ conferred on the apostles and their successors the duty of teaching, sanctifying, and ruling in His name and power. But the laity, too, share in the priestly, prophetic, and royal office of Christ and therefore have their own role to play in the mission of the whole People of God in the world" (*ibid.*, #2).

9 "Now, the gifts of the Spirit are diverse. He calls some to give clear witness to the desire for a heavenly home and to keep that desire green among the human family. He summons others to dedicate themselves to the earthly service of men and to make ready the material of the celestial realm by this ministry of theirs. Yet He frees all of them so that by putting aside love of self and bringing all earthly resources into the service of human life they can devote themselves to that future when humanity itself will become an offering accepted by God" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #38).

"Still, extraordinary gifts are not to be rashly sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from them" (*Lumen Gentium*, #12).

10 "These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation, for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church" (*ibid.*, #12).

11 "An indication of this manifold and pressing need is the unmistakable work of the Holy Spirit in making the laity today even more conscious of their own responsibility and inspiring them everywhere to serve Christ and the Church" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #1).

12 "The layman's religious program of life should take its special quality from his status as a married man and a family man, or as one who is unmarried or widowed, from his state of health, and from his professional and social activity. He should not cease to develop earnestly the qualities and talents bestowed on him in accord with these conditions of life, and he should make use of the gifts which he has received from the Holy Spirit" (*ibid.*, #4).

"In connection with this function (of evangelization), that state of life which is sanctified by a special sacrament is obviously of great value, namely, married and family life. For where Christianity pervades a whole way of life and ever increasingly transforms it, there will exist both the practice and an excellent school of the lay apostolate. In such a home, husband and wife find their proper vocation in being witnesses to one another and to their children of faith in Christ and love for Him. The Christian family loudly proclaims both the present virtues of the kingdom of God and the hope of a blessed life to come" (*Lumen Gentium*, #35).

"In the family, parents have the task of training their children from childhood to recognize God's love for all men. Especially by example they should teach them little by little to show concern for the material and spiritual needs of their neighbor. The whole of family life, then, would become a sort of apprenticeship for the apostolate" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #30).

"Christian spouses, in virtue of the sacrament of matrimony, signify and partake of the mystery of that unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and His Church. The spouses thereby help each other to attain to holiness in their married life and by the rearing and education of their children. And so, in their state and way of life, they have their own special gift among the People of God.

"For from the wedlock of Christians there comes the family, in which new citizens of human society are born. By the grace of the Holy Spirit received in baptism these are made children of God, thus perpetuating the People of God through the centuries. The family is, so to speak, the domestic Church. In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first preachers of the faith to their children. They should encourage them in the vocation which is proper to each of them, fostering with special care any religious vocation" (*Lumen Gentium*, #11).

¹³ "This Church of Christ is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful which, united with their pastors, are themselves called churches in the New Testament. For in their own locality these are the new people called by God, in the Holy Spirit and in much fullness. In them the faithful are gathered together by the preaching of the gospel of Christ, and the mystery of the Lord's Supper is celebrated, 'that by the flesh and blood of the Lord's body the whole brotherhood may be joined together'" (*ibid.*, #26).

"But because it is impossible for the bishop always and everywhere to preside over the whole flock in his Church, he cannot do other than establish lesser groupings of the faithful. Among these, parishes set up locally under a pastor who takes the place of the bishop are the most important: for in a certain way they represent the visible Church as it is established throughout the world.

"Therefore the liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered in the thinking and practice of both laity and clergy" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #42).

14 "Let them learn to share largeheartedly in the whole life of the Church according to the spirit of St. Augustine's saying: 'A man possesses the Holy Spirit to the measure of his love for Christ's Church'" (*Optatam Totius*, #9).

15 "Let them pray also that the strength and consolation of the Holy Spirit may descend copiously upon all those many Christians of whatsoever Church who endure suffering and deprivations for their unwavering loyalty to the name of Christ" (*Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, #30).

"There is a very urgent need for this individual apostolate in places where the freedom of the Church is seriously restricted. In exceedingly trying circumstances, the laity do what they can to take the place of priests, risking their freedom and sometimes their lives to teach Christian doctrine to those around them, to train them in a religious way of life and in a Catholic mentality, to lead them to receive the sacraments frequently, and to develop their piety, especially toward the Eucharist. This most sacred Synod heartily thanks God for continuing in our times to raise up lay persons of heroic fortitude in the midst of persecutions, and it embraces them with fatherly affection and gratitude" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #17).

16 "The Lord of Ages wisely and patiently follows out the plan of His grace on behalf of us sinners. In recent times He has begun to bestow more generously upon divided Christians remorse over their divisions and a longing for unity.

"Everywhere, large numbers have felt the impulse of this grace, and among our separated brethren also there increases from day to day a movement, fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of unity among all Christians" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*, #1).

17 "It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe, pervading and ruling over the entire Church, who brings about that marvelous communion of the faithful and joins them together so intimately in Christ that He is the principle of the Church's unity. By distributing various kinds of spiritual gifts and ministries, He enriches the Church of Jesus Christ with different functions 'in order to perfect the saints for a work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ'" (*ibid.*, #2).

18 "All this holds true not only for Christians, but for all men of good will in whose hearts grace works in an unseen way. For, since Christ died for all men, and since the ultimate vocation of man is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #22).

"Rather often men, deceived by the Evil One, have become caught up in futile reasoning and have exchanged the truth of God for a lie, serving the creature rather than the Creator. Or some there are who, living and dying in a world without God, are subject to utter hopelessness.. Consequently, to promote the glory of God and procure the salvation of all such men, and mindful of the command of the Lord, 'Preach the gospel to every creature,' the Church painstakingly fosters her missionary work.

"Likewise, we can say that in some real way they (Christians) are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them also He gives His gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with His sanctifying power. Some indeed He has strengthened to the extent of the shedding of their blood. In all of Christ's disciples the Spirit arouses the desire to be peacefully united, in the manner determined by Christ, as one flock under one shepherd, and He prompts them to pursue this goal. Mother Church never ceases to pray, hope, and work that they may gain this blessing. She exhorts her sons to purify and renew themselves so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the Church" (*Lumen Gentium*, #16, 15).

19 "In the attainment of all these goals, laymen have the greatest importance and deserve special attention. These are those Christians who have been incorporated into Christ by baptism and who live in the world. For it is up to them, imbued with the spirit of Christ, to be a leaven animating temporal affairs from within, disposing them always to become as Christ would wish them.

"But it is not enough for the Christian people to be present and organized in a given nation. Nor is it enough for them to carry out an apostolate of good example. They are organized and present for the purpose of announcing Christ to their non-Christian fellow-citizens by word and deed, and of aiding them toward the full reception of Christ" (*Ad Gentes*, #15).

20 "Since laymen share in their own way in the mission of the Church, their apostolic formation takes its special flavor from the distinctively secular quality of the lay state and from its own form of spirituality.

"Formation for the apostolate means a certain human and well-rounded formation adapted to the natural abilities and circumstances of each lay person. Well-informed about the modern world, the lay person should be an active member of his own society and be adjusted to its culture.

"Above all, however, the lay person should learn to advance the mission of Christ and the Church by basing his life on belief in the divine mystery of creation and redemption, and by being sensitive to the movement of the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the People of God and who would impel all men to love God the Father as well as the world and mankind in Him" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #29).

21 "The laity derive the right and duty with respect to the apostolate from their union with Christ their Head. Incorporated into Christ's Mystical Body through confirmation, they are assigned to the apostolate by the Lord himself.

"The apostolate is carried on through the faith, hope, and charity which the Holy Spirit diffuses in the hearts of all members of the Church" (*ibid.*, #3).

"Indeed, everyone should painstakingly ready himself personally for the apostolate, especially as an adult. For the advance of age brings with it better self-knowledge, thus enabling each person to evaluate more accurately the talents with which God has enriched his soul and to exercise more effectively those charismatic gifts which the Holy Spirit has bestowed on him for the good of his brothers" (*ibid.*, #30).

22 "They (the apostles) did not hesitate to speak out against governing powers which set themselves in opposition to the holy will of God: 'We must obey God rather than men.' This is the way along which countless martyrs and other believers have walked through all ages and over all the earth" (*Dignitatis Humanae*, #11).

23 "Every disciple of Christ has the obligation to do his part in spreading the faith. Yet Christ the Lord always calls whomever He chooses from among the number of His disciples, to be with Him and to be sent by Him to preach to the nations. Therefore, through the Holy Spirit, who distributes His charismatic gifts as He wills for the common good, Christ inspires the missionary vocation in the hearts of individuals" (*Ad Gentes*, #23).

"This most holy Synod truly rejoices that the earth has been sown with the seed of the Gospel and now bears fruit in many places under the influence of the Lord's Spirit. He it is who fills the whole earth and has stirred up a true missionary spirit in the hearts of many priests and faithful" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, #22).

"The Holy Spirit uses manifold means to arouse the mission spirit in the Church of God, and often anticipates the action of those whose task it is to rule the life of the Church" (*Ad Gentes*, #29).

24 "Secular institutes are not religious communities but they carry with them in the world a profession of the evangelical counsels which is genuine and complete, and recognized as such by the Church" (*Perfectae Caritatis*, #11).

25 "Very many martyrs have given luminous witness to this faith and continue to do so" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #21).

26 Through the Holy Spirit "the Father gives life to men who are dead from sin, till at last He revives in Christ even their mortal bodies" (*Lumen Gentium*, #4).

III

THE DEPARTMENT OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE LIVED UNDER THE DEPENDENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

As soon as a Christian becomes the least bit keenly aware that his entire life is secretly quickened by the Spirit of the Risen One, his life takes on certain more and more distinct and profound characteristic ways of acting. We shall point out three before noting by way of conclusion the principal signs of their authenticity.

1. A HUMBLE AND RECOLLECTED LIFE

To perceive the meaning of the abiding, active presence of the Spirit in oneself is first of all to perceive *the unspeakable transcendence of the divine life* to which God invites us; it is to have the sense of grace, of the absolute gratuitousness of the gift of God. The illusion of pride is so easy, the temptation of Pelagianism so frequent! Am I not intelligent and free? Can I not by my own powers begin at least to know the living God, to de-

sire His intimacy and to enter into it perhaps through a smattering of authentic, filial love?

To reason this way is to know neither God nor oneself. I am a creature, sin has left its stamp on me: for this twofold reason, I can do absolutely *nothing* by way of taking the slightest step toward divine intimacy and toward authentic charity. I am completely at the mercy of God's good pleasure.

Now, *this initiative on God's part* is not only accomplished in history and before my eyes by the launching of the plan of salvation, in a superlative way through the redemptive Incarnation and by the Church. It must *penetrate within me* to the deepest and most secret recesses of my being in order to transform it, in order to truly give me a new heart capable of loving in a divine way; and it must *remain* in me in order to constantly stir up my welcome and my faithfulness to the kindness of God.

That is what the Holy Spirit is: *the abiding initiative of God interiorized in every soul*, who has descended to the deep recesses of my being to give it the wherewith to respond to God, the wherewith to know and love, the wherewith to live in contact with the infinite God on a divine level. When we understand that, we begin to be *humble in truth*, knowing that everything comes from Someone Else and that there is no such thing as legitimate pride!

We also begin to be *recollected, vigilant* (that great theme of vigilance in the gospel!), attentive lest we break loose from that Other One without whom we are nothing and can do nothing supernaturally. We develop the habit of distrusting ourselves, our spontaneity to evil or in any case to mediocrity, in order to

refer ourselves constantly to the divine Guest, to strive to discern His wishes and desires, in order *to accomplish nothing that He cannot attribute to Himself* and for which He cannot be coresponsible with the Christian before Christ and the Father.

That is genuine recollection, possible even in the midst of a noisy crowd; the habit of referring one's actions, decisions, words, and intentions to the Holy Spirit, of submitting them to His approval. Basically it is the will to be docile, as St. Paul defined it: "You behave . . . as the Spirit dictates" (Rom. 8:4,14; Gal. 5:18); with, as a correlative, a willingness to practice renunciation with more emphasis being placed on your own will, the inspirations and motions of the Spirit being less easily grasped than the clear orders of the visible Church, which are also more demanding!

What must be understood is that this basic attitude of obedience, *far from smothering our personality, strangely enough strengthens it*. The Spirit, who is God, has as a matter of fact this ability, which no creature has, of inserting Himself directly into our inmost powers without bullying them, but on the contrary by divinely multiplying their energies. It is like a divine sap, that deeply spiritual, life-giving dew the liturgy speaks of, which seeps into an old root or into a pitiful stalk to make it bear unexpected flowers and fruits.

The Spirit is a divine principle associated with my humble freedom. My acts are posited *under the influence of this co-principle*; but they are truly *mine*, they are my free acts, intensely willed. The formula of the Christian acting in the Holy Spirit is the very same admirably profound one of the Apostles at the Council of Jerusalem: "It has been decided by the Holy Spir-

it and by ourselves" (Acts 25:28); or the one used by St. John at the end of the Apocalypse: "The Spirit and the Bride say" (together, with one voice) "to the Bridegroom: 'Come'" (Rv. 22:17).

2. AN INSPIRED AND FREE LIFE AS AN ADULT CHRISTIAN

In natural life, the child must be led from without; the ideas and activities must be imposed on him. Gradually, personal thought and a budding freedom awaken in him and come from within. In the supernatural order, the Christian enters into a Church where he first of all receives the truth and revealed moral directives.

But he is a child "called to liberty" (Gal. 5:13; cf. Rom. 8:21), that is to say, that the ideal is in no way that he be passively led, blessed, and shorn like a sheep, but on the contrary that he be led by an internal power in agreement with the pressure legitimately exercised over him by the hierarchical authority and the visible community. This power is none other than the presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of the Christian, who acts in his Christian thinking to make it a personal Christian one, and on his Christian will to make it a free outpouring. The active presence of the Spirit signifies *the interiorization of the truth and of the law of Christ* in the heart of the Christian, the guarantee of Christian spontaneity.

"He will lead you to the complete truth...all he tells you will be taken from mine," Jesus had promised (Jn. 16:12-15). This light of the Spirit extends even to a savory grasp of the truth, giving a lively and unshakable faith, the sense of Christ, the *Christian "spirit"*

(what an accurate expression!), the habit of evaluating things in the perspectives of the kingdom.

“Grant that we may have a right judgment in all things” (Collect for Thursday of Pentecost week): have we not seen this exemplified in many Christians who perhaps received precious little instruction but who are so docile to grace that they are wiser or at least more sure of themselves than priests and theologians.

The same holds for the law of Christ: “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (2 Cor. 3:1). On Pentecost the Church received His law on the new Sinai, that is, they received His love, that living love which is the Spirit, who reached down into the deeper recesses of men’s hearts. The Law for all Jews was but an obligation imposed on them from without, written in stone. Now it is a demand *interiorly perceived and loved*, whose objective law is but a reminder and an ever inadequate expression of it: a law written in hearts, as the prophets had foretold.

Superseded by this living Law, the ancient Law is infinitely transcended, both in its contents and in its minutest points. The Christian is not “free” in the sense of being “disassociated from all law,” since he willingly has passed under the law of Christ, under His supreme law of love. But to the extent that he shows himself fully docile to his inner Teacher, the unity between the external and the internal law is effected: prohibitions and obligations no longer count: he transcends them: “For me there are no forbidden things,” says Paul (1 Cor. 10:23; 6:12); the Christian “loves and does what he wants to,” according to Augustine.²

Alas! as long as we continue to be not very “spir-

itual" we must acquiesce in submitting ourselves to the constraint of objective laws, until such time as we are able to interiorize them. In any case, the Christian docile to the Spirit does not give the impression that many Christians give of being enslaved by Talmuds. Seeking to be above all a son, he mortifies his egotistical instincts, even if he has to submit to the letter of a law rather than to the flexibility of a filial or fraternal attitude demanded by a concrete interior situation or an external circumstance. What strikes us about the saints is the ease with which they obey God and their calm steadfastness in the face of trials and obstacles.

The same must be said about the apostolate. A Christian quickened by the Spirit does not wait to carry out the insistent orders of the hierarchy. It is a desire that burns in him and which will continue to burn even in the midst of failures.³

3. AN UNEXPECTED AND FULFILLED LIFE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE GIFTS

Lastly, the Spirit acts especially through His gifts, and they impart a fervor to the life of the Christian, a manner of growth very characteristic of the dynamism of every genuine life. The doctrine of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is not an adventitious or accessory theory, elaborated by a theological school and which we are free to reject. It is based on Scripture, on Tradition, on the liturgy, and on the lives of saintly men and women.

There is room for discussion as far as the number seven is concerned, on the precise meaning of each

gift, on the theological or moral virtue in which each one is rooted. What is important and to be preciousy preserved is *the form in which the Spirit intervenes* and which these gifts represent.

St. Thomas' interpretation has become classical. The gifts differ from the ordinary virtue not by the kind of acts they produce but by the manner in which it produces them. Here the Christian is *more profoundly worked upon by the Spirit*.

It is not that his intellect or will are less active but there is less activity arising from their ordinary strength and their habitual procedures, and more and more under transcendent forms by reason of a greater affinity with the Spirit, by the perviousness or keener sensitivity of His influence: the gifts are as it were spiritual instincts that enable him to obey the Holy Spirit promptly," says St. Thomas (Ia IIae, q. 68, art. 3). All souls in the state of grace possess one or the other of these gifts but to very varying degrees. They are so many flexibilities, docilities that put the soul in the state of being acted upon by God.

Their concern is to underscore the primacy of the initiative of God in the activity of the Christian. "The wind blows wherever it pleases" (Jn. 13:8). God is a Person, personal Love: He has preferences. He leads each one by paths that please Him. He reserves to Himself the right to upset ordinary habits and powers.

In the order of the gifts, we note on the one hand, the shattering of limitations, bringing astonishing possibilities into play: our thoughts turn to the wisdom of the answers given by a weak girl like Joan of Arc before her judges, to the sureness of advice given by a Cure of Ars, to the invincible strength of a Maria Goretti at the age of 12...

And on the other hand, transcending the habits of ordinary virtue and of holy conformisms, a *gushing forth of newness, of the unexpected*, a creative intuition, revolutionary initiatives, the vigorous disengagement of all the excuses trumped up by spontaneous laziness, and the holy adventure in abandonment to God. This is where the vocations of precursors, of founders of religious Orders, of reformers, of mystics enter in. A Father de Foucauld, a Father Godin, a Father Couturier were surely under the reign of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

We should not think that this order deadens the powers into "passivity." This last term under the pen of the mystics in no way has the modern psychological meaning given to it. It signifies that the spiritual man does not act according to his usual schemas but according to a new way immediately attributable to the Spirit.

Yet it is truly the man who acts, intensely consenting to that influence; certain habitual procedures of the mind are reduced to repose and passivity, but certainly *not the mind itself*. Need we say that this spiritual openness ordinarily presupposes the discipline of the virtues, the costly effort of a patient fidelity to reflection, asceticism and prayer.

Of this way of acting so characteristic of a life led by the Spirit, we will easily find a perfect example in the life of the *Virgin Mary*.⁴ We have no difficulty in picking out the humility and vigilance of this humble Handmaid of the Lord, the spontaneity of the Virgin of the Visitation or of Cana. And what an abundance of fruit there was in the Virgin who conceived of the Holy Spirit! What a continuous adventure that destiny was, from Nazareth and Bethlehem to the summit of Calvary and the Cenacle!

4. THE SIGNS OF AN AUTHENTIC INFLUENCE OF THE SPIRIT

Illusion is easy and frequent in this completely interior and in a certain sense uncontrollable domain. That is why I shall briefly recall to mind the signs of the authenticity of the Spirit which are often convergent. I will mention four and borrow freely from the statement of Mrs. Danielou⁵ who in turn admits that she simply intends to summarize the great spiritual authors.

The *first* derives from *the very manner* of God's hold over the soul: ordinarily it is kind, delicate, like the water that Ignatius of Antioch⁶ heard murmuring within himself; of a sweetness that is spiritual and not perceptible; bringing with it an impression of divine newness and of peace.

The *second* sign, and a surer one, comes from the *fruits* of this inspiration. "You will be able to tell them by their fruits" (Mt. 7:16,20). Now, St. Paul described the fruits of the Spirit: they are the evangelical virtues, the beatitudes put into effect, that freedom of heart that lays the foundations for peace and joy, and that exquisite happy medium that regulates and harmonizes the virtues; whereas the fruits of the flesh are violence and pride.⁷ These evangelical virtues, however, take on different directions in a contemplative and in an apostle.

The *third* sign is *the concern for and selfless service of the kingdom*. Any inspiration that benefits only the one inspired is suspect; that would turn him from his vocation, would isolate him without any important reason from his brothers. Here we must recall to mind what Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "The particular way in

which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose" (1 Cor. 7:7). Under His hold we can only build up and construct.⁸

The *fourth* and last sign is *obedience to the Church*,⁹ for authority is guaranteed by the Spirit, and to obey the hierarchical Church is a way of obeying the Spirit.¹⁰ But the existence of personal inspiration obliges those in authority (and a fortiori a spiritual director) to heed the action of the Spirit in each member of the Church.¹¹

1 "By the power of the gospel He (the Holy Spirit) makes the Church grow, perpetually renews her, and leads her to perfect union with her Spouse. The Spirit and the Bride both say to the Lord Jesus, 'Come!'" (*Lumen Gentium*, #4).

2 The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son who is the firstborn of many brothers, receives 'the firstfruits of the Spirit' by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #22).

3 "Since it is proper to the layman's state in life for him to spend his days in the midst of the world and of secular transactions, he is called by God to burn with the spirit of Christ and to exercise his apostolate in the world as a kind of leaven" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #2).

"Extraordinary gifts are not to be rashly sought after, nor are the fruits of apostolic labor to be presumptuously expected from them" (*Lumen Gentium*, #12).

4 "They can always find a wondrous model of such docility in the Blessed Virgin Mary. Led by the Holy spirit, she devoted herself entirely to the mystery of man's redemption" (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, #18).

5 Cf. her beautiful book *Action et inspiration* (ed. Beauchesne, 1937), chap. V.

6 Ignatius of Antioch is one of the most admirable of the early Christian martyrs. An old bishop, brought from his city to Rome where he was handed over to beasts in 117, he begged the Romans not to stand in the way of his martyrdom: "There is a living water within me that says: Come toward the Father." (His feast is celebrated on Feb. 1).

7 "Impelled by divine charity, they do good to all men, especially to those of the household of the faith, laying aside 'all malice and all deceit and pretense, and envy, and all slander,' and thereby they draw men to Christ. This charity of God, which 'is poured forth in our hearts by the

Holy Spirit who has been given to us,' enables the laity to express the true spirit of the beatitudes in their lives" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #4).

8 "By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: 'The manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone for profit'" (*Lumen Gentium*, #12).

9 "There is only one Spirit who according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, distributes His different gifts for the welfare of the Church. Among these gifts stands out the grace given to the apostles. To their authority, the Spirit Himself subjected even those who were endowed with charisms" (*ibid.*, #7).

10 "By this sense of faith which is aroused and sustained by the Spirit of truth, God's People accepts not the word of men but the very Word of God. It clings without fail to the faith once delivered to the saints, penetrates it more deeply by accurate insights, and applies it more thoroughly to life. All this it does under the lead of a sacred teaching authority to which it loyally defers" (*ibid.*, #12).

11 "Judgment as to their genuineness and proper use belongs to those who preside over the Church, and to whose special competence it belongs, not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good" (*ibid.*, #12).

"From the reception of these charisms or gifts, including those which are less dramatic, there arise for each believer the right and duty to use them in the Church and in the world for the good of mankind and for the upbuilding of the Church... They must act in communion with their brothers in Christ, especially with their pastors. The latter must make a judgment about the true nature and proper use of these gifts, not in order to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to what is good" (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, #3).

CONCLUSION

TWO REFLECTIONS

It seems that we can say: does not the action of the Spirit ultimately consist in forging authentic, Christian personalities, in giving each one the wherewithal to carry out his genuine vocation which is both social¹ and supernatural, especially the latter. The great temptation of modern man is to do without God and to be the architect of his own personality. The great reality of the Spirit reminds us who are Christians of that completely interior divine intervention through which God gives man the ability to fashion himself in an active way *in Him*, God being his partner and thereby to build the world and history with Him.

God is not a jealous tyrant; the power that man has to shape himself and the world, this God recognizes since he comes to consecrate it and to heighten it in an unspeakable way. *The Holy Spirit is the divine power by which man freely shapes himself into a child of God in Christ and freely shapes the world as the City of God in Christ.*² He is therefore the divine power by which man and humanity construct and merit their eternal situation. By becoming aware of this Christians, confronted with the errors of the modern world, will learn to be both very humble and infinitely proud of their Christian faith.

But it is not enough that they become conscious of it. They must go and receive more and more of the Spirit, drink Him at the most abundant source which

is the *most Holy Eucharist*.³ Christ, the Head, nevertheless willed to merit this unspeakable gift, the pure gratuitous gift of God, to earn it, and to pay its purchase price for us. We alluded to this above: the Spirit is the fruit and everlasting sign of the love of Christ in His passion, and He comes to us today only through His risen Body.

Now what is holy Mass? The sacramental offering of Jesus in His passion and in His passage to the Father, and the sacramental sharing in His now glorious Body. At Mass we, therefore, offer the *expiating Love that merited the Spirit* for the Church and for the world until the end of time. And there we receive the *glorified Body whence He effectively emanates* for us as the Breath and living Water we need to be new men and already eternal men.

Alas! it has become strange for us to see in this gift of the Spirit the fruit of the Communion that brings together and epitomizes all the others. Yet it is this very fruit that the Postcommunions of Easter and Pentecost attest to. It is this very fruit that the famous anaphora of Hippolytus, the oldest Roman Canon we know, written as early as 220, more explicitly asks for.

Can we not dream of a parish where Catholics who have been properly instructed will come to Sunday Mass gathered together in Christ and in His Spirit for the perfect praise of the Father and to hear His word. Offering together and receiving Holy Communion together, they would receive the abundance of that Spirit and He would fully carry out His work in them: transform them in order to unite them to Christ and to the Father, weld them together, and send each of them into the world to give testimony to the truth.

Then Sunday would be what it ought to be: both a weekly Easter and Pentecost.⁴ After all, it is much more than a dream: it is a *prodigious reality!* But, being men of little faith, do we know the gift of God?

¹ "The social order requires constant improvement. It must be founded on truth, built on justice, and animated by love; in freedom it should grow every day toward a more humane balance. An improvement in attitudes and widespread changes in society will have to take place if these objectives are to be gained.

"God's Spirit, who with a marvelous providence directs the unfolding of time and renews the face of the earth, is not absent from this development. The ferment of the gospel, too, has aroused and continues to arouse in man's heart the irresistible requirements of his dignity" (*Gaudium et Spes*, #26).

² "Since they have an active role to play in the whole life of the Church, laymen are not only bound to penetrate the world with a Christian spirit. They are also called to be witnesses to Christ in all things in the midst of human society" (*ibid.*, #43).

³ "The partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ does nothing other than transform us into that which we consume" (*Lumen Gentium*, #26).

"The Lord left behind a pledge of this hope and strength for life's journey in that sacrament of faith where natural elements refined by man are changed into His glorified Body and Blood, providing a meal of brotherly solidarity and a foretaste of the heavenly banquet" (*ibid.*, #38).

⁴ "By an apostolic tradition which took its origin from the very day of Christ's resurrection, the Church celebrates the paschal mystery every eighth day; with good reason this, then, bears the name of the Lord's day or the day of the Lord. For on this day Christ's faithful should come together into one place so that, by hearing the word of God and taking part in the Eucharist, they may call to mind the passion, the resurrection, and the glorification of the Lord Jesus, and may thank God who 'has begotten us again, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, unto a living hope.' Hence the Lord's day is the original feast day, and it should be proposed to the piety of the faithful and taught to them in such a way that it may become in fact a day of joy and of freedom from work" (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #106).

"The liturgical life of the parish and its relationship to the bishop must be fostered in the thinking and practice of both laity and clergy; efforts also must be made to encourage a sense of community within the parish, above all in the common celebration of the Sunday Mass" (*ibid.*, #42).

V

PRAYERS

O Holy Spirit, we are earth, low and heavy, arid land, obscure land.

But You are the Wind, the Fire, the living Water, the Ungraspable One and the Restless One, the blue Breath, the green Springtime, the red Flame.

*Come and take hold of us,
prevent us from sleeping,
from mildewing, from dying.*

O Holy Spirit, You are the Breath of the Risen One through whom the child of God in me has become living; the Wind from heaven in whom the child of God in me breathes the eternal air;

the Breath of the Word in whom the baptized proclaim the truth to the world;

The Wind of the Tempest at whose voice the nations gather together around the House of the Twelve.

*I am breathless.
Come, let me breathe You deeply!
And blow powerfully on the Church and on
the world!*

O Holy Spirit, You are fruitful Water, the Dew and the Sap which make grace in me burst forth into flowers and fruits.

the Water that in me unspeakably groans and murmurs: Come toward the Father;

the fresh Water of the Source which our world thirsts for, deceived in its cracked cisterns,

the Water that one draws with joy from the springs of the Savior!

I am thirsty and protrude my lips.

Come that I may drink of You.

And let the world drink with me!

O Holy Spirit, You are the Flame of my hearth that chooses darkness;

the Fire of the love of Jesus and of the Father who have come even into my poor heart;

the yearned for Fire that man cannot rob, but must receive You whom the Son brought to earth to burn away its sin and open it to love!

Come. The ashes are on my heart.

Make the flame flicker again.

And make the world your fire of live coals!

Amen.

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